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HAYDN'S MASSES.

No. XII.

Contributed by E. HOLMES.

THE successive pieces of this Mass are diversely instrumented. An accompaniment for the organ obligato, employing the soft stops in melodious passages of a pianoforte character rather than with any speciality of the organ, forms a prominent feature of many of the movements; though this obligato accompaniment is often subordinate or entirely suppressed. The musician feels a natural curiosity and interest in the management of the organ concerted with stringed instruments, corni inglese (tenor oboes), horns, trumpets, and drums. Such a design promises new pleasure to the ear, and one well worthy the test of performance. The *Kyrie*, in E flat, $\frac{3}{4}$, begins with a subject played by the organ and violins, in the old Italian vein of melody akin to that of Mozart in the 12th Mass. This subject is fugued upon in the voice parts with clearness and a simple purity of expression. It thus unaffectedly introduces itself:—

Vio. 1.
Vio. 2.
Bassi.

The syncopated theme and the melodious characteristic bass answer for the uncommonplace character of the music. There is grandeur as well as sweetness in the composition as it proceeds, and the first *tutti* of the orchestra accompanying the organ symphony is admirably disposed for effect. The beauty of holding notes when accompanying the changing harmonies and moving passages of the orchestra, already seems thoroughly understood by Haydn, notwithstanding the early period of this production. Frequent canons in the choral parts, forming sequences of harmony, show in the music a prevailing love of scientific experiment in counterpoint; but the fugal parts are relieved by passages constructed for the harmonious delight of the ear,—the voices accompany in chords, the violins and the organ re-echo each other in sweet passages of symphony, and the difficult art of composition, namely, that of sustaining the interest of the ear by an interchange of effects without much modulation or the intro-

duction of numerous subjects, is fully exemplified. A profound spirit of music is veiled in the simple artless guise of the *Kyrie*.

The *Gloria*, designed in three movements, proceeds to its close with the felicity of genius, continually increasing in interest. After the Priest has intoned "*Gloria in excelsis*," the chorus in unison, *tutti piano*, respond "*Et in terra pax*." An excellent orchestral disposition here attracts attention; the soft holding notes of voices and wind instruments, the busy movement of the violins on the low strings, and the vague feeling created by the absence of melody, contribute alike to excite the imagination. The hearer is on tiptoe for what is to follow; "*Good-will to men*" is thus elegantly expressed in harmony:—

Bo - næ, bo - næ vo - -

Treble.
Alto.
Tenor.
Bass.

- - - lun - ta - - - tis.

The succeeding phrases, "*laudamus*," "*benedicimus*," "*adoramus te*," have each a characteristic musical meaning; and "*glorificamus*" meets the eye in a sequence of 7 6,—an ancient progression, but never more appropriately employed to express triumph. The four vocal parts fall so effectively into the limits of voices, that they are quite pleasant to read:—

Glo - ri - fi - ca - - -

Treble.
Alto.
Tenor.
Bass.

Glo - ri - fi - Glo - ri - fi - -

ca - mus,

Glo - ri - fi

- - - ca-mus, Glo - ri - fi - ca-mus.

- - - ca-mus, Glo - ri - fi - ca-mus.

The climax of this sequence, which is accompanied only by stringed instruments and the organ, is formed by a burst of the full orchestra

on a chord of the diminished 7th on A \sharp , introducing a prolonged and effective cadence.

In continuation, the *Gratias*, in C minor, $\frac{3}{4}$, affords a quiet contrast, and brings to mind the *Stabat Mater* and other pieces of Haydn in his early church style. Solo voices are here first particularly displayed;—a duet of tenor and alto unaccompanied leads off, a duet for soprano and alto succeeds, then a trio, while the thin accompaniment gradually increases in interest and importance. At “*Jesu Christe*,” Haydn is inspired with one of those beautiful orchestral ideas which often occur with suddenness in his Masses pointing to a devotional impulse. Never did a Catholic painter bestow more careful and tender touches on the “*Ecce Homo*,” than the composer adorning the same subject with sounds. The feeling of Mozart is completely exemplified in the following passage—the F \sharp of the violins, and the F \sharp of the voices, are not to be mistaken:—

Vio. 1. *p* Je - - - su

Treble. *Dolce.* Je - - - su

Alto. Je - - - su

Tenor. Chris - - - te.

Bass. Chris - - - te.

Kindred sentiment in two composers never spoke more intelligibly,—a hundred musicians would at first sight attribute this passage to Mozart. The orchestra alone can give expression to such music; thus rendered, it still possesses the freshest and most genial interest. The chorus, “*Quoniam*,” and the fugato on two subjects, “*In gloria*,”—a sketch in double counterpoint of a vigour and fire almost unexampled,—are perfect specimens of jubilant choral music. It is impossible for sounds to glow with more delightful animation; as in some of Mozart's things, the music seems struck off at a heat—in one rapid conception. Out of one of the simplest themes in the world, with its natural counter-subject, Haydn has condensed such an effective fugal chorus, that we are left in admiration at the simplicity of the means, and the grand result obtained. The fugal theme—

In Glo-ri-a De-i Pa-tris.

A - - - men.

doubles in both subjects; and the contrapuntal structure exhibited in the numerous inversions

and dispersions of the harmony is highly interesting to the musician. The organ has a very florid and brilliant part in the “*Quoniam*,” which confers upon it a character of novelty and originality.

The *Credo*, in E flat, $\frac{3}{4}$, begins with a chorus of great solidity and magnificence. Independent features in each orchestral department of voices, stringed and wind instruments, here combine to realise the stately ideal of ecclesiastical music. The pompous sequences and imitative parts of the violins and basses, and the fine declamation of the voices, are sure of attracting profound attention in the audience. Well-contrasted movements succeed. “*Et incarnatus*,” a tenor solo in C minor, is a cantabile with a minute and softly-iterated accompaniment of stringed instruments, intended to show off the tones of the singer, with which no other holding note interferes. An expressive and gifted performer would certainly please in this excellent cantabile, which is in the best manner of Haydn, if not altogether his most successful effort in the style. At the closing cadence in C minor, there is a modulation of one bar to F minor, and a magnificent slow fugue in double counterpoint is led off by tenors and basses. The expression of gloomy solemnity conveyed in the large and ponderous features of the two subjects at “*Crucifixus*,” leaves nothing to be desired in the majesty of the art. This movement does the greatest honour to its author as a genuine inspiration of grandeur:—

Crucifix-us e-ti-am pro nobis, pro no-bis

Tenor *Largo.* Sub Pon-ti-o Pi-la-to, pas-sus.

Tutti. Bass. Tutti.

What the continuation of these noble and beautiful melodies is in the four parts, may well pique the curiosity of the reader. The “*Et resurrexit*,” *Allegro*, in E flat, $\frac{3}{4}$, is a brilliant and animated composition, serving as the introduction to an excellent fugue, *Presto*, $\frac{3}{4}$. Powerful unisons of the chorus at “*Judicare*” and “*Et unam sanctam*” give solidity to the music, notwithstanding the fire of the accompaniments. This feature will give a good idea of the music,—it is completely Haydn:—

Allegro. Vio. 1. Cu-jus reg-ni non

Vio. 2. Cu-jus reg-ni non

Treble. Cu-jus reg-ni non

Alto. Cu-jus reg-ni non

Tenor. Cu-jus reg-ni non

Bass. Cu-jus reg-ni non

The two last bars go three times successively, and then the holding notes are thus interrupted:—

Vio. 1.
Vio. 2.
Treble.
Alto.
Tenor.
Bass.

non, non

non, non

By such melodious passages and natural modulations, Haydn delights the ear, and yet his music never leads him astray from the text. No forcible image of the words is lost sight of; either by voices or instruments it is impressed on the mind, while it imparts the most gratifying variety to the music. The word "mortuorum" is an example. Sung by the basses alone *piano*, after a cessation of the full chorus, it gives opportunity to a passage of solemn and surprising effect, admirably instrumented. Haydn's happy genius in a spirited fugue, $\frac{3}{4}$ time, is well represented at "Et vitam." Accompanied in unison, or in the octave by the orchestra, there is nothing to divide attention from the counterpoint, which is of close and ingenious texture, and worked up admirably at the pedal point. Such excellent voice parts must always create effect, even if accompanied merely by the organ.

The *Sanctus*, syncopated and fugued, presents one of the most original designs ever attempted in that part of the Mass. Solo voices in succession take up this subject begun by the bass :—

Andante. Solo.

Bass.

Bassi.

Sanc - - - tus,

At the tenth bar the *tutti* of this theme begins, and with weight of tone and slow motion the effect is great and majestic. The Masses of Haydn display more of his qualities of magnificence in vocal composition than any of his works. The *Pleni* and *Hosanna* are both excellent. None of the grandeur of the last words of the *Sanctus* is sacrificed in the *Allegro* time; oboes assist the high voices in an effective sequence of sevenths, which is thus led off :—

Allegro.

Vio. 1.
Treble.
Alto.
Tenor.
Bass.
Bassi.

Pleni sunt coe - - - li et

In this elevated strain the music proceeds for several bars, when the *Hosanna* bursts in on a new subject with the voices and instruments in unison. The simple imitations in the voice parts, and the iteration of notes with a syllable to a note, give a picturesque character to this chorus. The climax at the last five bars of the voices upon the holding E of the basses, is very grand. One of the most pleasing movements in the Mass is the *Benedictus* in B flat, $\frac{4}{4}$, *Moderato*. This is a quartett for voices in the Italian style of melody, with an elegant and florid accompaniment, of which the new combinations form quite a study in instrumentation. The organ has a prominent part in the accompaniment, and attracts the listener in numerous runs, shakes, and melodiously-ornate passages of its solos; the oboes sustain the harmony; the violins have a dialogue with the organ. A bar of the symphony will shew what a pretty symmetrical effect is promised by the composition :—

Oboi.

Vio. 1. *p*
Vio. 2. *p*

Organ oblig.

When the voices are afterwards blended with passages of this kind, which they are most effectively, a delicate and beautiful effect is produced: we are reminded of the charming contrasts of tone in Mozart's compositions for keyed and stringed instruments. With a quartett of voices, two flutes, the stringed instruments, and a piano-forte, this quartett would produce a great effect in the drawing-room. The *Agnus Dei*, in A flat, is a quartett, subdued and religious in style, but which exhibits no great features of invention. The *Dona*, a double fugue, *Presto*, $\frac{6}{8}$, with a constant rattling violin accompaniment in semi-quavers, is a composition of the newest design, and the greatest vigour and genius in the execution. In this kind of fugue Haydn stands alone; beautiful episodes and effects relieve the fugue, and the chromatic unison passage of the chorus which twice occurs, astonishes, in that it should have been invented early in the last century. The score of Haydn's No. 12 belonged to Dr. Burney, and is probably of the age of his continental tour. In the esteem of musicians it will be always cherished for the freshness of its style. The new and brilliant ideas in it have lost nothing by age, and it is to be hoped they will be revived on many an occasion yet to come in church and chamber.